

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 06457 01 OF 05 282151Z
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 05 CAIRO 06457

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

FROM ATHERTON
USDEL NO. 37

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR EG US IS XF
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL
- FEBRUARY 28

SUMMARY: MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL THIS
AFTERNOON DEALT PRIMARILY WITH SADAT'S MESSAGE TO BEGIN.
I EXPLAINED OUR REASONS FOR DELAYING DELIVERY OF MESSAGE
AND SAID IT STRUCK US AS IMPORTANT FROM STANDPOINT OF
EGYPT'S OWN INTERESTS TO HAVE IT WORDED IN SUCH A WAY
AS TO PROMOTE EGYPT'S OBJECTIVES OF FACILITATING
NEGOTIATIONS. I MADE POINTS PARA 2 STATE 50901, STRES-
SING THAT MESSAGE WOULD BE RECEIVED ON EVE OF BEGIN'S
DEPARTURE FOR THE U.S., THAT SADAT HAD SAID HE WANTED
TO HELP PRESIDENT CARTER IN HIS TASK OF BRINGING
ISRAELIS AROUND ON CERTAIN POINTS AND THAT WE WANTED
TO MAKE SURE THE MESSAGE HAD THIS EFFECT. I THEN EX-
PLAINED OUR SPECIFIC RESERVATIONS ABOUT PASSAGE ON THE
POSSIBILITY OF EXPIRATION OF SINAI II. KAMEL SAID HE
THOUGHT I HAD MADE A GOOD CASE BUT ADDED THAT BEGIN
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SECRET

PAGE 02 CAIRO 06457 01 OF 05 282151Z

HAD TO UNDERSTAND "WE JUST CAN'T GO ON FOREVER." ON
ISSUE OF REFERENCE TO COMMITMENT BEGIN MADE TO THE
PRESIDENT ABOUT ISRAEL'S INTENTIONS WITH RESPECT TO
SOVEREIGNTY BEYOND THE 1967 LINES, KAMEL AND BOUTROS
GHALI INSISTED THEIR RECORD SHOWED THAT THE PRESIDENT
HAD TOLD SADAT SOMETHING VERY CLOSE TO WHAT SADAT
HAD PROPOSED TO PUT IN HIS MESSAGE TO BEGIN. EGYPTIANS

PUT UP STIFF RESISTANCE TO MY SUGGESTION FOR OMISSION OF PORTION OF THE MESSAGE WHICH SPELLED OUT LINKAGE BETWEEN EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI AGREEMENT AND A SETTLEMENT OF THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. KAMEL SAID HE FELT THE POINT SHOULD BE MADE QUITE CLEARLY TO ISRAELIS; THEIR WHOLE APPROACH TO NEGOTIATIONS WAS TO TRY TO SEPARATE EGYPT FROM OTHER ASPECTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. KAMEL ADDED THAT IT SHOULD BE CLEAR TO BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND TO BEGIN WHEN THEY MEET THAT EGYPT WILL NOT GO FOR A BILATERAL AGREEMENT IN ABSENCE OF SOLUTION OF THE REST OF THE PROBLEM. FINALLY I MADE THE POINT THAT TERMS OF SADAT'S MESSAGE MIGHT CAUSE ISRAELIS SOME BEWILDERMENT AND RAISE QUESTION IN THEIR MINDS AS TO WHETHER HE REALLY WANTS TO CONTINUE WITH WORK ON THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. EGYPTIANS SAID SADAT WANTS TO GO ON WITH THE EFFORT TO GET A DECLARATION BUT WANTS TO GET DOWN TO THE REAL ISSUES, TO DO "BIG BUSINESS". KAMEL SAID HE THOUGHT SADAT FEELS ISRAEL IS AVOIDING THE CRUCIAL DECISION ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE.

I ALSO GAVE KAMEL BRIEFING ON GOI DECISION OF LAST SUNDAY ON SETTLEMENTS. I EXPLAINED THAT WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THE DECISION IN FACT MEANS SUSPENSION OF PLANS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF FURTHER SETTLEMENTS IN SINAI AND CREATION OF ONLY TWO MORE ALREADY APPROVED SETTLEMENTS ON WEST BANK, AND THOSE IN EXISTING MILITARY CAMPS.

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PAGE 03 CAIRO 06457 01 OF 05 282151Z

SPEAKING WITH CONSIDERABLE EMOTION, KAMEL DESCRIBED ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY AS AN EMBARRASSMENT TO EGYPT AND A CHALLENGE TO THE U.S. KAMEL POINTED OUT THAT PURSUIT OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL WHILE LATTER CONTINUES SETTLEMENTS GIVES OTHER ARABS THE IMPRESSION THAT EGYPT CONDONES THIS ISRAELI ACTIVITY. KAMEL REPEATEDLY ASKED HOW EGYPT COULD CONTINUE (PRESUMABLY MEANING CONTINUE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS) IN SUCH A SITUATION. BY DINT OF REPETITION I TRIED TO GET ACROSS TO KAMEL THAT THE GOI DECISION OF LAST SUNDAY WAS A POSITIVE ONE, RELATIVELY SPEAKING, ALBEIT NOT ALL WE WOULD HAVE WANTED, BUT JUDGING FROM HIS COMMENTS TO PRESS AFTERWARDS, I DOUBT THAT I SUCCEEDED. KAMEL INSISTED THAT ONLY RIGHT THING FOR BEGIN TO DO WOULD BE TO STOP ACTIVITY. HE SAID HE THOUGHT SADAT WOULD WANT TO ADD SOMETHING ON SETTLEMENTS TO HIS MESSAGE TO BEGIN. SINCE KAMEL HAD ANOTHER APPOINTMENT WE AGREED TO DISCUSS DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES IN DETAIL TOMORROW, MARCH 1. MEETING WAS SET FOR 10:30 A.M. THEREAFTER WE WILL HELICOPTER TO ISMAILIA FOR MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SADAT AT 2:30 P.M. END SUMMARY.

1. MEETING LASTED APPROXIMATELY HOUR AND ONE-HALF. WITH KAMEL WERE MINISTER OF STATE BOUTROS GHALI AND CHEF DE CABINET AHMED MAHEE. ON OUR SIDE IN ADDITION TO EILTS AND MYSELF, STERNER AND KORN WERE PRESENT.

2. THE FOREIGN MINISTER ASKED WHETHER I HAD CONVEYED SADAT'S ORAL MESSAGE TO BEGIN. I SAID I HAD NOT BUT THAT I HAD DESCRIBED IN A GENERAL WAY THE THINGS THAT WERE ON SADAT'S MIND AND THE REASONS WHY HE FELT THE WAY HE DID. I HAD ALSO TOLD HIM THAT I EXPECTED A

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 06457 02 OF 05 282052Z
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S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 05 CAIRO 06457
EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS
MESSAGE OF SOME KIND BUT DID NOT KNOW EXACTLY WHEN I
WOULD BE RECEIVING IT. I TOLD KAMEL THAT BEGIN WAS
LOOKING FORWARD WITH CONSIDERABLE EAGERNESS TO RECEIVING
SADAT'S MESSAGE.

3. I TOLD THE FOREIGN MINISTER THAT I APPRECIATED HIS
GOVERNMENT'S AGREEING TO MY DELAYING DELIVERY OF THE
MESSAGE. WE WOULD OF COURSE CONVEY SADAT'S MESSAGE
AFTER MY TALKS HERE IN CAIRO IN WHATEVER FORM SADAT
WANTED. I HAD SUGGESTED DELAYING THE MESSAGE FOR TWO
REASONS. FIRST, THERE WERE ONE OR TWO POINTS ON WHICH
I NEEDED SOME CLARIFICATION IN ORDER TO EXPLAIN TO THE
ISRAELIS PRECISELY WHAT LAY BEHIND SADAT'S THINKING.
SECONDLY, THERE WERE FEW PLACES WHERE I THOUGHT THE
MESSAGE HAD PRESENTATIONAL PROBLEMS. I ADDED PRIME
MINISTER BEGIN WOULD ATTACH CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO
THIS MESSAGE AND IT THEREFORE STRUCK US AS IMPORTANT,
FROM THE STANDPOINT OF EGYPT'S OWN INTERESTS, TO HAVE
IT WORDED IN SUCH A WAY THAT EGYPT'S OBJECTIVES OF
FACILITATING AND EXPEDITING THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS
WOULD BE PROMOTED RATHER THAN SET BACK. WE HAD THEREFORE

TAKEN THE LIBERTY OF REDOING THE DRAFT AND INCORPORATING
CERTAIN OF OUR SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGE, TO ILLUSTRATE
POINTS I WOULD MAKE. I POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT THE
MESSAGE WAS 95 PERCENT INTACT AND WE WERE NOT TRYING
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SECRET

PAGE 02 CAIRO 06457 02 OF 05 282052Z

TO WRITE SADAT'S MESSAGE FOR HIM.

4. SAYING I FIRST WANTED TO MAKE A GENERAL OVERALL
OBSERVATION, I THEN MADE THE POINTS IN PARA 2 OF STATE
50901. I STRESSED THAT THE MESSAGE WOULD BE RECEIVED
ON THE EVE OF BEGIN'S DEPARTURE FOR WASHINGTON, THAT
SADAT HAD SAID THAT HE WANTED TO HELP PRESIDENT CARTER
IN HIS TASK OF BRINGING THE ISRAELIS AROUND ON CERTAIN
POINTS, AND THAT WE WANTED TO MAKE SURE THAT THE
MESSAGE WOULD HAVE THIS EFFECT. THE BEGIN VISIT WOULD
BE IMPORTANT IN OUR EFFORTS TO GET ISRAEL TO ACCEPT
CERTAIN PRINCIPLES THAT WOULD BE THE KEY TO FURTHER
NEGOTIATION PROGRESS, AMONG THEM THE PRINCIPLE OF THE
APPLICABILITY OF RESOLUTION 242 WITHDRAWAL PROVISIONS TO
ALL FRONTS OF THE CONFLICT. THIS WOULD NOT BE EASY
FOR THE PRESIDENT AND WE WOULD NEED ALL THE HELP WE
COULD GET. I ADDED THAT AS A RESULT OF MY TALKS IN
JERUSALEM, I HAVE THE DEFINITE FEELING THAT THE ISRAELI
GOVERNMENT IS IN A STATE OF FLUX ON MANY OF THE KEY ISSUES.
WE WANTED TO DO WHAT WE COULD TO NUDGE THESE DEVELOPMENTS
IN A CONSTRUCTIVE DIRECTION

5. WITH THIS INTRODUCTION I THEN MOVED TO THE SPECIFIC
POINTS ON WHICH WE FORESAW PROBLEMS IN THE ORAL MESSAGE.
I EXPLAINED OUR RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE PASSAGE ON THE
POSSIBILITY OF THE EXPIRATION OF THE SINAI II AGREEMENT.
I SAID SECRETARY VANCE HAD PERSONALLY ASKED ME TO URGE
THAT NOTHING ON THIS SUBJECT BE SAID AT THIS TIME. OUR
FEELING WAS THAT TO DO SO COULD SERIOUSLY UNDERCUT OUR
EFFORTS ON THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. IT WOULD
GIVE BEGIN AN ISSUE ON WHICH TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM
THE CENTRAL ISSUES, SINCE WE THOUGHT THE LANGUAGE IN
THE MESSAGE COULD BE MISCONSTRUED AS A THREAT. NODDING
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PAGE 03 CAIRO 06457 02 OF 05 282052Z

FREQUENTLY AS I MADE THESE POINTS, KAMEL SAID WHEN I
FINISHED THAT HE THOUGHT I HAD MADE A GOOD CASE. HE
ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT BEGIN HAD TO UNDERSTAND THAT "WE
CAN'T JUST GO ON FOREVER." I SAID OUR ADVICE WOULD
BE, WHATEVER THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT MIGHT WISH TO SAY

ON THIS SUBJECT, IT WOULD BE BETTER TO OMIT IT IN THIS MESSAGE. I ADDED AS A PERSONAL OBSERVATION THAT I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND BOUTROS GHALI TO GET OUT THE SADAT-FORD LETTER WHICH WAS PART OF THE SINAI II AGREEMENT AND WHICH DEALT WITH THE RENEWAL OF UNEF. THE FOREIGN MINISTER INDICATED HE WOULD DO THIS. I SAID WE WOULD WANT TO DISCUSS AT SOME POINT WITH THEM QUESTIONS OF INTERPRETATION.

6. THE SECOND POINT I RAISED (PARA 4, STATE 50901) WAS THE REFERENCE TO THE COMMITMENT THAT BEGIN MADE TO PRESIDENT CARTER ABOUT ISRAEL'S INTENTIONS WITH RESPECT TO SOVEREIGNTY BEYOND THE 1967 LINES. HERE AN EXTENDED DISCUSSION ENSUED WITH BOTH KAMEL AND BOUTROS GHALI INSISTING THAT THEIR RECORD SHOWED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD SAID TO SADAT SOMETHING VERY CLOSE TO WHAT SADAT IN FACT PROPOSED TO PUT IN HIS MESSAGE TO BEGIN. I AGREED TO LOOK UP THE RECORD AND I AM SENDING A SEPARATE MESSAGE ON THIS SUBJECT.

7. THIRDLY, I SAID THAT WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO OMIT PART OF THE PARAGRAPH UNDER THE TICK MARK IN PARAGRAPH 9 OF SADAT'S PROPOSED MESSAGE (CAIRO 6172) WHICH SPELLED OUT THE LINKAGE BETWEEN AN EGYPT-ISRAEL AGREEMENT AND A SETTLEMENT OF THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION. I TOLD THE EGYPTIANS THAT I THOUGHT THIS PASSAGE COULD

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 06457 03 OF 05 282201Z
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S E C R E T SECTION 03 OF 05 CAIRO 06457

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

FROM ATHERTON

USDEL NO. 37

BE READ TO SUGGEST THAT EGYPT WOULD HOLD AN AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL ON THE SINAI HOSTAGE TO COMPLETION OF ALL ASPECTS OF THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION, EVEN IF HUSSEIN AND PALESTINIANS PROVED UNREASONABLE IN NEGOTIATIONS. I WAS CONCERNED THAT THE EFFECT WOULD BE TO STIFFEN ISRAELI RESISTANCE TO REACHING ACCOMMODATION ON THE LANGUAGE DEALING WITH THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE IN THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

8. THE EGYPTIANS PUT UP THEIR STIFFEST RESISTANCE ON THIS POINT, SINCE THE EGYPTIAN POLICY OBJECTIVE WAS, AFTER ALL, A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE SETTLEMENT. I SAID I FULLY UNDERSTOOD; INDEED IT WAS THE OBJECTIVE OF THE UNITED STATES AS WELL. BUT IT SEEMED TO ME ONE COULD ENVISAGE A HYPOTHETICAL CASE IN WHICH NEGOTIATIONS HAD BECOME DOMINATED BY AN EXTREME PLO POSITION WHICH MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ARRIVE AT A FULL PEACE SETTLEMENT WITHIN A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME. WOULD THE EGYPTIANS REALLY WANT TO SAY THAT THEY WOULD ALLOW THEIR
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PAGE 02 CAIRO 06457 03 OF 05 282201Z

OWN FREEDOM OF ACTION TO BE FROZEN IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES? BOUTROS GHALI RESPONDED THAT HE THOUGHT JUST THE OPPOSITE; IT WAS IN EGYPT'S INTEREST TO STRESS THIS POINT. EVERYONE WAS GOING AROUND SAYING THAT EGYPT INTENDED TO PROCEED BILATERALLY. IT WAS IMPORTANT TO SCOTCH THIS MISAPPREHENSION.

9. THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID WE SEEMED TO BE TERRIBLY CONCERNED ABOUT BEGIN'S REACTION TO EVERYTHING IN THIS MESSAGE. WERE WE OBJECTING TO THE EGYPTIANS' TALKING FRANKLY TO HIM? WASN'T IT ABOUT TIME THAT WE DID MORE OF THIS? AT THIS POINT BOUTROS GHALI MADE THE HELPFUL REMARK THAT IT WASN'T JUST A QUESTION OF TALKING TO BEGIN, WE ALSO HAD TO ASK OURSELVES WHETHER WE WERE HELPING OR HINDERING PRESIDENT CARTER IN HIS EFFORTS WITH THE ISRAELIS. THE FOREIGN MINISTER, SEEMINGLY UN-ERSUADED, SAID ISRAEL'S WHOLE APPROACH IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS WAS TO TRY TO SEPARATE EGYPT OUT FROM THE OTHER ASPECTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. WHY SHOULD WE INDULGE BEGIN IN HIS ILLUSIONS ABOUT THIS? I REPLIED THAT WE WERE NOT TRYING TO GET EGYPT TO CHANGE ITS SUBSTANTIVE POSITION. IT WAS REALLY THE TACTICAL QUESTION WE WERE RAISING AS TO WHETHER IT WAS A GOOD IDEA TO MAKE THIS POINT, PARTICULARLY IN THE PRECISE TERMS IT WAS MADE, IN THIS ORAL MESSAGE. KAMEL PER-SISTED: WE JUST WANT IT TO BE CLEAR, WHEN BEGIN MEETS WITH CARTER, THAT BOTH UNDERSTAND OUR POSITION ON THIS POINT. EGYPT WOULD NOT GO FOR A BILATERAL AGREEMENT

IN THE ABSENCE OF A SOLUTION OF THE REST OF THE
PROBLEM.

10. AMBASSADOR EILTS SAID HE THOUGHT THERE MIGHT BE
ANOTHER ASPECT TO CONSIDER. HE WONDERED WHETHER EGYPT
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PAGE 03 CAIRO 06457 03 OF 05 282201Z

IN FACT PUT THIS POSITION FORTH IN THE GAMASY-WEIZMAN
TALKS. AND IF NOT, WOULD DOING SO IN THIS MESSAGE
PERHAPS POSE PROBLEMS FOR GAMASY IN HIS ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS
WITH WEIZMAN. NEITHER KAMEL NOR BOUTROS GHALI
RESPONDED DIRECTLY TO THIS POINT. KAMEL MERELY COMMENTED
THAT ON CERTAIN OCCASIONS YOU HAD TO SPEAK PLAINLY, AND HE
THOUGHT THIS WAS THE TIME TO BE BLUNT ON THIS PARTICULAR
ISSUE. BOUTROS GHALI SAID HE RECALLED SADAT HAD STATED
PUBLICLY MORE THAN ONCE THAT EGYPT COULD DEFER IMPLEMENTATION
OF FINAL STAGE OF AN ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT UNTIL THERE
WAS AGREEMENT ON A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT.

11. AS A FINAL SPECIFIC POINT, I SAID I THOUGHT IT WAS
A MISTAKE TO INCLUDE, IN PARAGRAPH 4, THE INFORMATION
THAT SADAT HAD CONVEYED TO PRESIDENT CARTER ABOUT HIS
WILLINGNESS TO SEE ISRAEL MAINTAIN MILITARY POINTS FOR
SECURITY IN THE WEST BANK DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD. I
KNEW THIS WAS ACCURATE AND WOULD BE HELPFUL TO PRESIDENT
CARTER, BUT AGAIN I WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE EFFECT IF
THIS PORTION OF THE LETTER SHOULD LEAK. IT SEEMED TO ME
IT COULD BE EMBARRASSING TO PRESIDENT SADAT. KAMEL
SAID HE THOUGHT I HAD A POINT. HE THANKED ME FOR
RAISING IT AND ASKED ME TO MAKE SURE THAT I MENTIONED
IT TO PRESIDENT SADAT AS WELL TOMORROW.

12. FINALLY, I SAID THAT LOOKING OVER THE MESSAGE AS
A WHOLE, WITH ITS BROAD THEME THAT PRESIDENT SADAT
THOUGHT NEGOTIATIONS HAD SOMEHOW TAKEN A WRONG TURN, I
THOUGHT THE ISRAELIS MIGHT BE SOMEWHAT BEWILDERED AS TO
WHAT PRECISE POINT PRESIDENT SADAT WAS TRYING TO GET
ACROSS. WHEN SADAT SPOKE IN TERMS OF GETTING TO THE
HEART OF THE CENTRAL ISSUES, IT SEEMED TO US THAT THIS
WAS EXACTLY WHAT THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WAS

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 06457 04 OF 05 032027Z
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S E C R E T SECTION 04 OF 05 CAIRO 06457

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

FROM ATHERTON

USDEL NO. 37

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR GARBLED IN PARA FOURTEEN
OMISSION (SECOND CORRECTED COPY)

DESIGNED TO DO. IT WAS CLEAR THE TWO SIDES HAD QUITE
DIFFERENT CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES TO THE NEGOTIATIONS;
THAT WAS PART OF THE PROBLEM WE FACED. BUT CLEARLY WE
HAD TO FIND SOME MEANS OF TAKING THE FIRST STEP THAT
WOULD ENABLE THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS TO CONTINUE. IN
OUR OPINION, THE DECLARATION WOULD BE A WORTHWHILE
ACHIEVEMENT. WE THOUGHT THE EFFECT OF RECEIVING SADAT'S
MESSAGE MIGHT BE TO LEAD THE ISRAELIS TO ASK WHAT IS
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT PRESIDENT SADAT WANTS AND
WHAT WE ARE PRESENTLY DOING?

13. THE EGYPTIANS CLEARLY HAD NO READY ANSWER TO THIS
QUERY, AND KAMEL SAID THE SAME QUESTION HAD OCCURRED
TO HIM AFTER OUR LAST MEETING WITH SADAT. AFTER AN
EXTENDED PAUSE, BOUTROS GHALI SAID HE THOUGHT THE KEY
WAS SADAT'S REFERENCE AT THE END OF THE MESSAGE TO HIS
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PAGE 02 CAIRO 06457 04 OF 05 032027Z

DESIRE TO DO "BIG BUSINESS." HE WANTED TO GO ON WITH
THE EFFORT TO GET A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES BUT HE
WANTED TO GET DOWN TO THE REAL ISSUES. AMBASSADOR EILTS
ASKED WHETHER THEY THOUGHT SADAT WANTED ANOTHER MEETING
WITH BEGIN. FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL QUICKLY REPLIED,
"NO, NO, WE DIDN'T SAY THAT." IN A FURTHER EFFORT TO
EXPLAIN SADAT'S FRAME OF MIND, HE ADDED HE THOUGHT
PRESIDENT SADAT FELT ISRAEL WAS AVOIDING THE CRUCIAL
DECISION ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE. IF NEGOTIATIONS WERE

TO ADVANCE, ISRAEL WOULD HAVE TO MAKE THIS DECISION. OTHERWISE, NEGOTIATIONS COULD GO ON FOR YEARS. I SAID I THOUGHT THIS EXPLANATION WOULD BE HELPFUL, ADDING WE SHOULD NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE ACCOMPLISHMENT THAT A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WOULD REPRESENT. IN THE EYES OF THE WORLD, IT HAD BECOME A TEST OF WHETHER REAL RESULTS COULD FLOW FROM SADAT'S INITIATIVE. THE DECLARATION WOULD MAKE IT CLEAR AMONG OTHER THINGS THAT WE WERE DEALING WITH A PALESTINIAN PROBLEM, NOT MERELY A REFUGEE PROBLEM AS IT WAS DESCRIBED IN RESOLUION 242. THIS WOULD BE A MAJOR ADVANCE. IT WOULD NOT BE FAIR OR ACCURATE TO DISMISS THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES AS BEING MERELY A REHASHING OF WHAT WAS ALREADY IN RESOLUION 242, WHICH DID NOT DEAL WITH THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM.

14. I ASKED KAMEL WHAT DEGREE OF CONFIDENTIALITY PRESIDENT SADAT WANTS TO MAINTAIN REGARDING HIS MESSAGE TO BEGIN. DOES HE WISH IT KEPT SECRET? IF HE WANTS, I SAID, I WILL DELIVER THE MESSAGE INPRIVATE AND WILL EMPHASIZE THAT IT SHOULD BE KEPT ENTIRELY CONFIDENTIAL. I ALSO ASKED IF SADAT WANTS THE VERY FACT OF THE MESSAGE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL. KAMEL SAID HE HAD SPOKEN TO SADAT ABOUT THIS BUT HAD NOT GOTTEN AN ANSWER. WE SHOULD DISCUSS IT WITH SADAT WHEN WE SEE HIM TOMMORROW,
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PAGE 03 CAIRO 06457 04 OF 05 032027Z

I SAID NOTHING HAD COME OUT THIS FAR IN ISRAEL ABOUT THE MESSAGE. I HAD TOLD ONLY BEGIN AND DAYAN. I WAS SURE THEY WOULD DO THEIR BEST TO KEEP IT IN CONFIDENCE, ALTHOUGH I COULD NOT GUARANTEE THAT SOONER OR LATER KNOWLEDGE OF IT WOULD NOT COME OUT IN SOME WAY.

15. I THEN SAID I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE KAMEL SOME BACKGROUND ON LAST SUNDAY'S ISRAELI GOVERNMENT DECISION ON SETTLEMENTS. IN THE CABINET DISCUSSION THERE WERE TWO OPPOSING CAMPS. SEVERAL MINISTERS ARGUED STRONGLY FOR A DECISION TO SUSPEND FURTHER SETTLEMENTS. WEIZMAN WAS ONE OF THE LEADERS OF THAT GROUP. ANOTHER GROUP, LED BY SHARON, ARGUED FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE SETTLEMENTS. THE PROBLEM WAS DEBATED AT LENGTH. FINALLY IT WAS DECIDED TO ANNOUNCE THAT NO DECISION WAS NEEDED, THAT THE EXISTING DECISIONS WOULD BE ADHERED TO. KAMEL INTERJECTED "THEY WILL CONTINUE SETTLEMENTS." I SAID BEGIN HAS TO DEAL WITH MANY IN HIS OWN PARTY WHO FEEL VERY STRONGLY ON THE SETTLEMENT ISSUE. HOWEVER, BEGIN RECOGNIZES THAT CONTINUATION OF SETTLEMENTS HAS AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONS AND ON THE ATMOSPHERE OF NEGOTIATIONS. I EXPLAINED THAT SINCE THE CABINET'S PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE OUTCOME OF THE DEBATE ON SETTLEMENTS WAS UNCLEAR, WE ASKED SEVERAL

SENIOR SOURCES INCLUDING BEGIN WHAT ITS REAL MEANING WAS. WE WERE TOLD THAT IT IN FACT MEANS THAT THE GOI WILL PUT A STOP TO FURTHER SETTLEMENTS IN SINAI. ON THE WEST BANK, SETTLEMENTS WILL BE SET UP ON TWO SITES IN EXISTING ISRAELI MILITARY CAMPS. KAMEL SAID HE WANTED TO UNDERSTAND CLEARLY, THERE WILL BE TWO MORE SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK? I CONFIRMED THAT THIS WAS MY UNDERSTANDING.

16. I REITERATED THAT THE USG OPPOSES ALL SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY AND WOULD HAVE PREFERRED A COMPLETE FREEZE, BUT SAID I THOUGHT THE SUNDAY ISRAELI CABINET DECISION
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PAGE 04 CAIRO 06457 04 OF 05 032027Z

A POSITIVE ONE SINCE IT PUTS A STOP TO FURTHER SETTLEMENTS IN THE SINAI AND LIMITS ACTIVITY ON THE WEST BANK. KAMEL REPEATED "BUT THEY WILL CONTINUE." HE ADDED QUITE EMPHATICALLY THAT "WE CAN'T AGREE TO THIS AT ALL."

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 06457 05 OF 05 282134Z
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S E C R E T SECTION 05 OF 05 CAIRO 06457

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

FROM ATHERTON

USDEL NO. 37

ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY IS "A CLEAR CHALLENGE TO THE UNITED STATES" KAMEL SAID. KAMEL ASKED "WHY ARE

THEY PUTTING UP THESE SETTLEMENTS NOW?" "HOW CAN WE EXPLAIN TO THE OTHER ARABS THAT WE ARE CONTINUING NEGOTIATIONS WHILE ISRAEL CONTINUES TO SET UP SETTLEMENTS. IT WILL LOOK AS THOUGH WE ACCEPT THIS ISRAELI ACTIVITY. IN SUCH A SITUATION WE CANNOT CONTINUE." I AGAIN POINTED OUT THAT THE ISRAELI CABINET DECISION WAS TO SUSPEND SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY IN SINAI AND TO ADD ONLY TWO PREVIOUSLY APPROVED SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK WITHIN EXISTING ISRAELI MILITARY CAMPS. KAMEL OBJECTED THAT THE PUBLIC WILL NOT KNOW THIS. WHY DID THE ISRAELIS NOT MAKE CLEAR THE MEANING OF THEIR DECISION? I SAID BEGIN HAS TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS. AHMED MAHER ASKED WHAT IS MEANT WHEN WE SAY SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY WILL BE SUSPENDED IN SINAI. WILL THERE BE NO FURTHER BROADENING OF EXISTING SETTLEMENTS? I SAID THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT DECISION AS I UNDERSTOOD IT MEANS NO NEW SETTLEMENTS. KAMEL SAID SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 CAIRO 06457 05 OF 05 282134Z

BUT THEY WILL BE BROADENING THEIR SETTLEMENTS. I EXPLAINED THAT I UNDERSTOOD THE DECISION ON SINAI INVOLVED THREE POINTS. THE FIRST IS THERE WILL BE NO NEW SETTLEMENTS. PLANS FOR ADDITIONAL SINAI SETTLEMENTS THAT WERE ALREADY APPROVED HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED. SECOND, THERE WILL BE NO NEW INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION UNDERTAKEN, I.E. NO NEW ROADS, WATER TANKS, AND SO FORTH. THIRD, WHERE SETTLEMENTS ALREADY EXIST, NEW HOUSING AND THE EXPANSION OF ARABLE LAND WILL BE PERMITTED. THUS THE DECISION WAS NOT ENTIRELY CLEARCUT. KAMEL SAID NO, IT IS CLEARCUT. IT MEANS A CONTINUATION OF ACTIVITY. BOUTROS GHALI SAID SADAT'S LETTER TO BEGIN WILL HAVE TO INCLUDE SOMETHING ON THIS. KAMEL SAID YES, OF COURSE, THAT WILL BE ADDED TO THE LETTER. KAMEL ASKED HOW CAN THE ISRAELIS CONTINUE THEIR SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ATHERTON SHUTTLE? IT IS EMBARRASSING FOR YOU AND FOR US. EILTS SAID HE COULD UNDERSTAND EGYPTIAN FEELINGS ON THIS, BUT IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE CABINET DECISION WAS AT LEAST A PARTIAL VICTORY FOR WEIZMAN AND FOR OTHERS WHO OPPOSE CONTINUED SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY. SHARON HAS HAD HIS WINGS CLIPPED.

17. KAMEL RECALLED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD TERMED ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ILLEGAL AND AN OBSTACLE TO PEACE. BEGIN HAS CHOSEN THIS MOMENT, KAMEL SAID, TO CONTINUE WITH OBSTRUCTIONS TO PEACE. SO, KAMEL ASKED, HOW CAN WE CONTINUE? I SAID I THOUGHT A MORE ACCURATE WAY OF LOOKING AT THE SITUATION WAS THAT BEGIN CHOSE THIS MOMENT TO CUT BACK ON SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY. WITHOUT THE ISRAELI CABINET DECISION OF SUNDAY, WHICH OUR STRONG POSITION ON SETTLEMENTS HAD HELPED TO FORCE, THERE WOULD

BE MANY MORE SETTLEMENTS IN SINAI IN FUTURE. KAMEL SAID
BUT TO SHOW GOOD FAITH BEGIN SHOULD HAVE CEASED ALL
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 CAIRO 06457 05 OF 05 282134Z

SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY, NEW SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK
AND STRENGTHENING OF EXISTING ONES IN SINAI. KAMEL
SAID WE SHOULD TELL BEGIN THAT HE IS OBSTRUCTING PEACE.
I REITERATED THAT THE ISRAELI CABINET DECISION SHOULD
BE REGARDED AS A POSITIVE ONE SINCE IT SUSPENDS PLANS
FOR ADDITIONAL SETTLEMENTS IN THE SINAI. I SAID WE
WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE PREFERRED A FULL SUSPENSION OF ALL
SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY, BUT THE SUNDAY DECISION IS MUCH
BETTER THAN NOTHING.

18. KAMEL SAID HE HAD AGAIN TO EMPHASIZE THAT ISRAELI
SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY GOES AGAINST THE SPIRIT OF SADAT'S
INITIATIVE AND HIS MESSAGE TO BEGIN. WHEN THEY DO
SUCH THINGS IN THE MIDDLE OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS, KAMEL
ASKED, HOW CAN WE PROCEED? HOW DO WE LOOK BEFORE THE
WHOLE ARAB WORLD? KAMEL SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT
PRESIDENT SADAT WOULD SAY ABOUT THE ISRAELI DECISION,
BUT HE (KAMEL) FELT THAT IT WAS FAR WORSE AN ACTION
THAN SADAT'S WITHDRAWAL OF THE EGYPTIAN DELEGATION FROM
JERUSALEM. IT WAS A "FLAGRANT ACT" AND ONE THAT "UNDER-
MINES THE U.S. PEACE EFFORT."

19. BECAUSE KAMEL HAD AN APPOINTMENT SHORTLY THEREAFTER
WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, IT WAS DECIDED THAT WE WOULD
POSTPONE DISCUSSION OF THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES
UNTIL MORNING MARCH 1. KAMEL SUGGESTED THAT WE MEET
AGAIN AT 1030 MARCH 1 AND THEN GO ON DIRECTLY FROM HIS
OFFICE TO ISMAILIA FOR LUNCH AND FOR MEETING WITH
PRESIDENT SADAT AT 2:30 THAT AFTERNOON. IN PREPARATION
FOR TOMORROW MORNING'S DISCUSSION WE GAVE AHMED MAHER
COPIES OF THE NEW ISRAELI TEXT (DRAFT B, TRANSMITTED
JERUSALEM 557). EILTS

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